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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [KDEM](#) [EG](#)
SUBJECT: OCTOBER 25 MEETING WITH AYMAN NOUR'S WIFE

REF: A. CAIRO 2511

[1](#)B. CAIRO 3133
[1](#)C. STATE 147166

Classified By: Minister-Counselor for Economic and Political Affairs
William R. Stewart, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) In an October 25 meeting with poloff, Gameela Ismail (wife of imprisoned Ghad party leader Ayman Nour) said that on October 20 Nour's blood pressure had shot up, and he started having heart palpitations. She rushed to Torah Prison, together with a cardiac specialist, Dr. Mahmoud Hassanein. Ismail asserted that entry was refused to Hassanein, as he is neither Nour's relative nor lawyer (the only visitors allowed to prisoners under Egyptian law). Ismail asserted that she also applied for permission for the head of the Cardiac Unit at the Agouza Police Hospital to visit Nour, as this particular doctor had told her he was willing to do an exam, but the prison administration refused the request. She said that Nour's blood pressure subsequently came down, and that his condition is stable again.

[1](#)2. (C) Referencing the Secretary's October 16 visit to Cairo and discussion of Nour's imprisonment with President Mubarak, Ismail tearfully told poloff, "What the U.S. does is just games. Secretary Rice's words are meaningless, they have no impact." She said that Nour disagrees with her, takes heart from his case being raised by the USG, and asked Ismail to not be publicly critical of the U.S. for supporting him. Ismail said she had become particularly depressed after speaking recently with democracy advocate and prominent Egyptian publisher Hisham Kassem after he returned from Washington (Kassem was in DC in mid-September to receive the National Endowment for Democracy's 2007 "Democracy Award"). Ismail asserted that Kassem had told her, "nobody cares about democracy in Egypt," and that, "if you got arrested, there would not even be a statement released by the USG." She said she and Kassem are now urging Ibrahim Eissa, the editor-in-chief of the independent newspaper Al Dustour, who is currently facing various lawsuits (ref b), to "get out of the country somehow," and that he is "considering doing so." She said they told Eissa, "The U.S. cannot protect you, and will not help you."

[1](#)3. (C) Ismail said that the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), based in Geneva, had previously informed her that Nour's case would be raised in its plenary session in April 2008. However, according to Ismail, Speaker of the Egyptian People's Assembly Fathi Surour and National Democratic Party parliamentary bloc leader Abdel Ahad Gamal Al Deen have since engaged with the IPU to stop such an eventuality. They are reportedly concerned about Egypt getting kicked out of the organization, and/or by the possible penalty of every member Parliament writing letters of complaints to the People's

Assembly. Ismail said that IPU personnel told her that Surour had invited the IPU's 7-member Human Rights Committee to visit Cairo at the beginning of November, promising them meetings with the Minister of Interior and the Public Prosecutor, and perhaps Nour. Ismail visited Nour on October 23, and he told her that the prison is clearly preparing for some kind of visit, painting the walls, making some other renovations, and bringing in medical equipment, "temporarily, for show," to demonstrate that the prison has the capability to medically treat Nour.

¶4. (C) The Ghad party's court battle regarding the take-over of the party by government-backed Nour rival Moussa Mustafa Moussa drags on, and Ismail is not at all optimistic that it will be resolved in favor of the Nour faction in the party (ref A has details on the Ghad party leadership dispute). Moussa has not yet moved to assume control of Al Ghad's downtown Cairo headquarters. The lease is in Ismail's name (rather than the party's), and as a cautionary measure, she has taken down the huge Ghad sign outside the building, and hung up a "The Legal Group for Ayman Nour" and a smaller "Ghad Party" signs instead.

¶5. (C) Poloff raised the Human Rights Defenders Fund (ref C) with Ismail. Noting that she could "really use the money," as she is still unemployed and is having difficulty finding employment due to her being Nour's wife, Ismail said that nonetheless, taking money from the USG, even if it is through the auspices of a partner NGO, is "not worth the cost I would pay I would be vilified in the state-backed press."

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